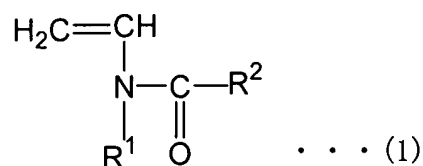


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (original): A seed coating composition comprising a water absorbing resin and a granulating material, said water absorbing resin being obtained by copolymerizing a monomer mixture containing N-vinylcarboxylic acid amide represented by the following formula (1) and a crosslinking monomer;



wherein R¹ is a hydrogen atom, a methyl group or a phenyl group, R² is a hydrogen atom, an alkyl group of 1 to 4 carbon atoms or a phenyl group, and R¹ and R² may be the same or different.

2. (original): The seed coating composition as claimed in claim 1, wherein the monomer mixture further contains a copolymerizable monomer which is copolymerizable with N-vinylcarboxylic acid amide.

3. (original): The seed coating composition as claimed in claim 2, wherein the copolymerizable monomer is at least one monomer selected from the group consisting of acrylic acid, a salt thereof, (meth)acrylamide-2-methylpropanesulfonic acid, a salt thereof, vinylsulfonic acid and a salt thereof.

4. (original): The seed coating composition as claimed in claim 2 or 3, wherein the monomer mixture contains the N-vinylcarboxylic acid amide in an amount of not less than 50% by weight and the copolymerizable monomer in an amount of not more than 50% by weight, the sum of the N-vinylcarboxylic acid amide and the copolymerizable monomer being 100% by weight.

5. (original): The seed coating composition as claimed in claim 1, wherein the crosslinking monomer is used in an amount of 2×10^{-4} to 10% by mol based on the N-vinylcarboxylic acid amide.

6. (original): The seed coating composition as claimed in claim 2, wherein the crosslinking monomer is used in an amount of 2×10^{-4} to 10% by mol based on the total of the N-vinylcarboxylic acid amide and the copolymerizable monomer.

7. (original): The seed coating composition as claimed in claim 1, wherein the water absorbing resin is contained in an amount of 1 to 10 parts by weight based on 100 parts by weight of the granulating material.

8. (original): The seed coating composition as claimed in claim 1, 5 or 7, wherein the water absorbing resin is a poly(N-vinylacetamide) crosslinked product.

9. (currently amended): A coated seed to a surface of which the seed coating composition of ~~any one of claims 1 to 8~~ claim 1 has been bonded with a binder.

10. (currently amended): A seed coating method comprising coating a surface of a seed with the seed coating composition of ~~any one of claims 1 to 8~~ claim 1.